

in a bottom face thereof with an inlet, an outlet always in communication with the inlet, and an inlet-outlet subpoenaing[.], and

valve mounts mounting said valve main bodies including joint members containing internal passages communicating with ports of said valves and operatively connecting said valves and said fluid controllers in selected fluid flow relation.

**IN THE DRAWINGS:**

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve the amendments to Fig. 1 to the extent of changing reference numbers "81" and "92" to "82" and "94", respectively, as indicated in red on the enclosed drawing copy.

**REMARKS**

Claims 1 to 6 are in the application and stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over DuRoss et al. By this amendment, amendments are made to claim 1 in order to more clearly define Applicants' invention to better distinguish the claims over the DuRoss et al. reference. Also, the specification has been expanded at page 11, before the paragraph beginning at line 12, to better explain the on-off valves 81 and 82 as required in the Office Action. Otherwise, the specification has been amended at page 6, lines 10, 11 to overcome the objections raised in the Office Action. The specification has further been revised in order to cure minor language defects of spelling and grammar.

Finally, Fig. 1 of the drawing has been revised to the extent of correcting erroneous reference number designations whereby it is believed that the objections raised against the drawings under 37 CFR § 1.83(a) are overcome.

The amendments to claim 1, which also affect claims 2 to 6 due to dependency, operate to more clearly define Applicants' invention as being directed to a fluid control apparatus containing on-off devices in the form of one or more valves having valve bodies containing either two parts (e.g., valve body 101a in Fig. 3(b)) or three parts (e.g., valve body 102a in Fig. 3(b)), which valve bodies can be conveniently interconnected into desired groupings without the need for external piping. Thus, as best shown in Fig. 4 and in the sectional perspective views of Fig. 5, 6 and 7, the fluid connection between adjacent valve bodies is effected through the use of joint members 31, 33, 34, 36 or 39, and the like, which connect to adjacent valve bodies and that have internal passages (e.g., 31(a), 33(a), or the like) in the form of v-shaped channels for connecting parts of adjacent valves in series.

This claimed arrangement is in clear contradistinction to the valve arrangement disclosed in the DuRoss, et al. patent which shows no more than a valve block 102 containing dual diaphragm-operated valves 202 and 204 which are integrally formed in the valve block and integrated by internal passages within the block. DuRoss, et al. is devoid of any suggestions or teachings of the provision of two-part valves and/or three-part valves which are fluidly interconnected, not by tubing, but instead by means of valve mounts each containing an internal passage for fluidly connecting ports of adjacent valve bodies.

The references which have been cited, but not applied by the Examiner, have also been considered but none, regardless of whether they are taken alone or considered with any other reference of record in the application, are seen as suggesting the present invention or of curing the defects in DuRoss et al. as an anticipation of Applicants' invention.

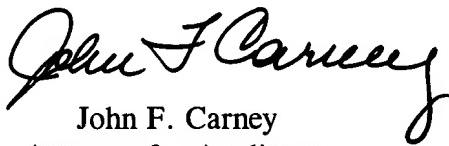
Accordingly, it is submitted that the claims in the application, particularly as amended, patentably define over the reference and are allowable. The Examiner is therefore requested to favorably consider this amendment and to allow the application.

If, for any reason, it is believed that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees, which may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN, HATTORI,  
McLELAND & NAUGHTON



John F. Carney  
Attorney for Applicants  
Reg. No. 20,276

Atty. Docket No. **980150**  
1725 K Street, N.W., Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20006  
Tel: (202) 659-2930  
Fax: (202) 887-0357  
JFC/vrb